

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CGT AND WFTU

1. FRANCE'S DOMINANT LABOR ORGANIZATION, NAMELY COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED CGT (CONFEDERATION GENERALE DU TRAVAIL), WAS FOUNDED IN 1895 IN LIMOGES AND NORMALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN CELEBRATING ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR. HOWEVER, UNTIL RECENTLY THE CGT SEEMED TO IGNORE THIS ANNIVERSARY, PROBABLY BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT THE NUMBER 80 BUT ALSO BECAUSE THE RETRACING OF CGT HISTORY COULD REVIVE MEMORIES OF COMMUNIST TACTICS WHICH RESULTED IN THE SUBVERSION OF THE ORIGINAL DEMOCRATIC CGT. AT THIS PARTICULAR POINT OF THE PC-PS SQUABBLING ABOUT LIBERTIES BOTH IN FRANCE AND PORTUGAL THE CGT HAD GOOD REASON TO AVOID THE REVIVAL OF SUCH MEMORIES.

2. THE INITIATIVE BY FORCE OUVRIERE TO HOLD ITS SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CONFEDERAL COMMITTEE IN LIMOGES (6-8 JUNE) IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF CGT AMIDST RENEWED CLAIMS THAT FO CONSTITUTES

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THE REAL SUCCESSOR OF THE CGT SEEMS TO HAVE COMPELLED

CGT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE ANNIVERSARY.

3. INTERESTINGLY THE EMPHASIS IN THE CGT PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES IN THIS CONNECTION WILL BE ON INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS. SEGUY, CGT SEC GEN, TOLD EMBOFF ON 19 JUNE THAT MOST IMPORTANT EVENT FOR CGT'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY WILL BE THE MEETING OF THE WFTU GENERAL COUNCIL, TO BE HELD IN PARIS ON 12 OCTOBER. SEGUY RECALLED THAT THIS WILL BE THE FIRST TIME SINCE WFTU'S EXPULSION FROM FRANCE IN 1952 THAT A MAJOR WFTU MEETING WILL BE HELD IN FRANCE. SEGUY REACTED WITH A SMILE TO EMBOFF'S REMARK THAT GOF PERMISSION OF THE WFTU MEETING WAS NOT CONSISTENT WITH PC-CGT ACCUSATIONS THAT GOF RESTRICTS TRADE UNION RIGHTS.

4. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS SEGUY CONFIRMED THAT CGT, ACTING IN THE NAME OF WFTU, HAD REQUESTED "TWO YEARS AGO" GOF AUTHORITY FOR THE WFTU TO MOVE ITS HEADQUARTERS FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS. HE CLAIMED THAT GOF HAS YET TO REPLY TO THIS REQUEST WHICH WAS SUBMITTED IN WRITING. ASKED WHY CGT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE WFTU HEAD-QUARTERS MOVING TO PARIS, SEGUY SAID THAT THE WFTU CAN BENEFIT FROM A CLOSER CONTACT WITH THE REALITIES OF THE CAPITALIST WORLD.

5. SEGUY VOLUNTEERED ALSO THAT CGT HAD REQUESTED GOF APPROVAL OF A REQUEST THAT THE WFTU METAL WORKERS DEPARTMENT BE HEADQUARTERED IN PARIS (INSTEAD OF PRAGUE) BUT IN THE YEAR AND A HALF SINCE THE REQUEST WAS MADE THERE HAS BEEN AGAIN NO REPLY.

6. COMMENT: BASED ON INFORMATION FROM LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS, THE EMBASSY HAD REPORTED THE CGT REQUEST CONCERNING WFTU SHORTLY AFTER IT WAS MADE TO THE THEN LABOR MINISTER EDGAR FAURE. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT AT THE TIME SOME GOF OFFICIALS HAD ENTERTAINED THE THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS THERE WERE SOME ADVANTAGES TO BE DERIVED FROM HAVING THE WFTU OPERATE IN WE ENVIRONMENT.

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